

NSW GOVERNMENT WEEKLY UPDATE – 10 APRIL 2016

PREMIER WRAPS UP TRIP TO ISRAEL

- Premier Mike Baird has become the first serving NSW Premier to visit Israel, wrapping up a trade mission focused on medicinal cannabis, cyber security and innovation.
- The NSW Government is eager to learn from Israel's experiences as a start-up nation, and the Premier signed a new agreement which commits NSW and Israel to invest \$2 million into co-operative start up and innovation projects – particularly those focused on cyber security, agribusiness and water management.
- NSW 's exploration of the use of medicinal cannabis for sufferers of chronic pain and the terminally ill was discussed and formal collaboration established with Israel.
- Further, a new partnership between Sydney's Garvan Institute of Medical Research and Israel's Weizmann Institute of Science will pave the way for Australia's first cellular genomic research facility to be based at the Garvan Institute in Darlinghurst – the NSW Government will provide \$5 million toward its establishment.

\$187 MILLION SOUTH EAST REGIONAL HOSPITAL OFFICIALLY OPENED

- The new \$187 million state of the art South East Regional Hospital at Bega has been officially opened and will deliver modern healthcare to the Bega Valley and NSW South Coast communities.
- The new hospital includes an emergency medicine unit, additional integrated critical care beds, an inpatient mental health service and new and expanded

services including acute medical, surgical, maternity and paediatrics as well as improved community drug and alcohol services.

- The hospital has been built on a brand new site one kilometre south of the Bega CBD and is complete with a helipad and car parking for about 500 cars.
- The South East Regional Hospital redevelopment was jointly funded by the Commonwealth's \$160.1 million under the Health and Hospitals Fund and \$26.9 million from the NSW Government.

RETAIL AND HOUSING GROWTH CONTINUES IN NSW

- The NSW economy continues to lead the nation, with ABS figures confirming ongoing support for both retail spending and building approvals.
- The official data showed retail trade increased by 4.6% in the year to February, above the national result of 3.3% - the 31st consecutive month that through the year retail spending growth was above the national average.
- The number of dwellings approved also rose in February, up 14.3% to 5,115 approvals, well above the average of the last five years (4,146).
- NSW continues to see positive results across every key economic indicator, and all signs show that we can expect the NSW economy to set the standard for the rest of the nation well into the future.

CONSTRUCTION KING SYDNEY DOMINATES CRANE INDEX

- The latest RLB Crane Index shows that almost half of Australia's cranes are on Sydney's skyline making it the 'construction king' in the nation.
- There are now 288 cranes on Sydney's skyline, the greatest level of activity Sydney has experienced since the Index's launch in 2013.
- Much of the crane activity was for residential construction with 83% of Sydney's cranes involved in building new homes.
- The NSW Government is spending a record \$68.6 billion on infrastructure over the next four years in addition to our \$20 billion Rebuilding NSW plan to transform NSW.

ATLAS LIFTING THE WEIGHT OF THE WORLD OFF APPRENTICES AND TRAINEES

- Apprentices and trainees can now get vocational education and training advice support from the Apprentice and Trainee Logbook App (ATLAS).
- The app will assist students by providing phone or message support on a range of issues during their training, directing students to the most relevant source for fast and reliable assistance.
- ATLAS will also act as an electronic logbook where students, supervisors and employers can monitor working hours and training progression, eliminating the need for a paper logbook.
- The NSW Government has set a priority of improving completion rates for apprentices and trainees and ATLAS is one important tool in reaching this goal.

UBER GOES GREY IN AN AUSTRALIA FIRST

- NSW Seniors will have access to discounted rides thanks to an Australian first alliance between ride sharing service Uber and the NSW Government.
- Uber and Seniors Card will offer card holders:
 - Initial \$20 off first UberX ride for new users;
 - Tailored workshops on Uber business model and on how to use the Uber app;and
 - Briefing sessions for Seniors Card members interested in becoming driver partners with Uber.
- Additional discounts may also apply such as \$10 off Uber rides for selected events.
- Last year the NSW Government promised to provide more savings for Seniors Card holders by investing a further \$2 million over four years into the program to expand the number of businesses offering discounts.

NEW INCIDENT RESPONSE MEASURES FOLLOWING HARBOUR BRIDGE CRASH REVIEW

- The NSW Government has announced new incident response measures to clear accidents faster following a review of a major crash on Sydney Harbour Bridge last month.
- Some of the changes being made include:
 - Crash Investigation Unit response staff will not start their morning shift near the Sydney CBD;
 - The CBD Motorcycle Response Team, which can move more quickly through heavy traffic, will take on some crash investigation tasks;
 - Communication to commuters will be improved, encouraging a 'stay away' or 'use trains or ferries' message rather than 'expect delays' or 'use alternative routes'; and
 - Funding being committed to explore improved measuring technology for crash investigation to reduce road closure times.

PLANS UNDERWAY TO MOVE 300+ PUBLIC SERVICE ROLES TO GOSFORD

- The NSW Government will deliver on an election promise to relocate more than 300 public service roles to Gosford.
- The roles, from the Department of Finance, Services and Innovation (DFSI), will be housed in a mixed-use building to be constructed on a portion of the former school site at 20 Mann Street which will include street-level retail and al-fresco dining – part of a broader plan for the sale and redevelopment of the former school site.
- This announcement coincides with the NSW Government committing to a further 10 year lease at 92-100 Donnison St, Gosford, where over 620 staff from the State Insurance Regulatory Authority, Safe Work NSW, Insurance and Care NSW and Legal Aid NSW are located.
- The NSW Government will engage the local community to ensure the site offers a mix of uses with construction of the new DFSI building expected to be completed in 2018.

MEDICAL ASSESSMENTS FOR NSW DRIVER LICENCES TO GO DIGITAL

- Minister for Roads Duncan Gay has announced a new online system which will streamline NSW Fitness to Drive medical assessments.

- The NSW Fitness to Drive medical assessment form will now be filled-out and submitted by medical practitioners using their respective practice's software systems to the Roads and Maritime Review Unit immediately for review.
- Medical assessments are required for heavy vehicle drivers, elderly drivers and motorists with medical conditions such as epilepsy, sleep disorders and Diabetes.
- Doctors who do not have a practice software system can still submit forms electronically via Health Link's Portal interface.

NSW GOVERNMENT UNVEILS 2016/17 ARTS AND CULTURAL PROGRAM

- Artists, arts and cultural organisations across NSW are invited to apply for a wide array of funding opportunities under the NSW Liberals & National Government's 2016/17 Arts and Cultural Development Program.
- The program will support visual arts, museums, literature, theatre, dance, music, regional touring, capital works and professional development for artists across the state.
- Applications will run progressively until September and are currently open for the NSW Visual Arts Emerging Fellowship, Performing Arts Touring and Artists Support program.
- To view the guidelines and other details of the program, visit www.arts.nsw.gov.au